RAJYA SABHA

Wednesday, the 26th July, 2000/4 Sravana, 1922 (Saka)

The House met at eleven of the clock, Mr. Chairman *in the chair.*

THE FIRST ANNIVERSARY OF INDIA'S VICTORY IN KARGIL

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon Members, July 26, 2000 marks the first anniversary of India's victory in the Kargil conflict when the last of the Pakistani aggressors were evicted from our territory. Recalling the sacrifices of many of our brave soldiers and airmen who laid down their lives to protect the territorial integrity of India and the acts of courage and gallantry displayed by our troops, this House salutes the memory of those who were killed in defending the motherland and applauds the dedication and professional commitment of the members of our armed forces. This House reaffirms the nation's commitment to the welfare of the families of the martyrs and of those who were disabled. This House also recalls, with pride and joy, the great unity, solidarity and sense of purpose that the entire nation displayed during the crisis which demonstrated India's unshakeable resolve to foil any misadventure of the kind that our neighbour regrettably engaged herself in.

Today, on the occasion of the Kargil Vijay Diwas, this House reiterates India's resolve to beat back any aggression as well as our commitment to the path of peace and maintenance of good relations with our neighbours.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

ग्रामीण क्षेत्रों के लिए कुटीर ज्योति कार्यक्रम

*41. श्री कपिल सिब्बल:†
डा॰ डी॰ मस्तान:

क्या विद्युत मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या यह सच है कि देश में, विशेषकर ग्रामीण एवं आदिवासी क्षेत्रों में गरीबी की रेखा से नीचे जीवनयापन कर रहे परिवारों के घरों में बिजली उपलब्ध कराने के लिए कुटीर ज्योति कार्यक्रम नामक एक कार्यक्रम आरम्भ किया गया था;

(ख) यदि हां, तो दिसम्बर, 1999 तक ग्रामीण क्षेत्रों में कितने प्रतिशत गरीब परिवारों को कुटीरज्योति कार्यक्रम के तहत् बिजली उपलब्ध करायी जा चुकी है; और

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†सभा में यह प्रश्न श्री कपिल सिब्बल द्वारा पूछा गया।

(ग) शेष परिवारों को कब तक बिजली उपलब्ध करा दिए जाने की संभावना है?

विद्युत मंत्रलय में राज्य मंत्री (श्रीमती जयवंती मेहता) (क) और (ग) विवरण सभा पटल पर रख दिया गया है।

(क) से (ग) जी, हां। भारत सरकार ने हरिजन और आदिवासी परिवारों समेत गरीबी रेखा से नीचे वाले ग्रामीण परिवारों को सिंगल प्वाइंट बिजली कनैक्शन प्रदान करने के लिए वर्ष 1988-89 में कुटीर-ज्योति कार्यक्रम चलाया था। 31.12.1999 के अंत तक 35.56 लाख से अधिक कनैक्शन मुहैया कराए जा चुके हैं। भारत सरकार सिंगल प्वाइंट की बिजली कनैक्शन मुहैया कराने के लिए विद्युत बोर्डों/राज्य सरकारों को ग्रामीण विद्युतीकरण निगम (आर०ई०सी०) के जरिए अनुदान के रूप में निधियां प्रदान करती है। कनेक्शन मुहैया कराने के लिए प्राथमिकता तथा समय सीमा का निर्धारण एवं निर्णय संबंधित राज्य विद्युत बोर्डों/राज्य सरकारों द्वारा किया जाता है। 31.12.1999 तक मुहैया कराए गए कनैक्शनों की राज्य-वार प्रगति विवरण में दी गई है।

विवरण—I

31.12.1999 तक मुहैया कराये गये कुटीर ज्योति कनेक्शनों की राज्यवार प्रगति

क्रम सं०	राज्य	मुहैया कराए गए सिंगल प्वाइंट लाइट कनेक्शनों की सं०
1.	आन्ध्र प्रदेश	431674
2.	अरुणाचल प्रदेश	16459
3.	असम	44680
4.	बिहार	290504
5.	गोवा	1050
6.	गुजरात	59607
7.	हरियाणा	9996
8.	हिमाचल प्रदेश	20397
9.	जम्मू एवं कश्मीर	893
10.	कर्नाटक	614430
11.	केरल	36202
12.	मध्य प्रदेश	681906
13.	महाराष्ट्र	246786
14.	मणिपुर	16066
15.	मेघालय	19440

क्रम सं॰	राज्य	मुहैया कराए गए सिंगल प्वाइंट लाइट कनेक्शनों की सं॰
16.	मिजोरम	19972
17.	नागालैंड	13721
18.	उड़ीसा	100818
19.	पंजाब	22746
20.	राजस्थान	100061
21.	सिक्किम	20415
22.	तमिलनाडु	414301
23.	त्रिपुरा	19863
24.	उत्तर प्रदेश	213471
25.	प॰ बंगाल	139225
26.	केन्द्र शासित प्रदेश	1724
	कुल जोड़	3556407

Kutir Jyoti Programme for Rural Areas

†*41. SHRI KAPIL SIBAL:††
DR. D. MASTHAN:

Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a programme namely Kutir Jyoti Programme was launched to provide electricity in the houses of families living below poverty line in the country, particularly in rural and tribal areas;

(b) if so, the percentage of poor families in rural areas who have been provided with electricity under Kutir Jyoti Programme till December 1999; and

(c) by when the remaining families are likely to be provided with electricity?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) to (c) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

(a) to (c) Yes, Sir. Government of India launched Kutir Jyoti Programme in 1988-89 for extending single point light connection to the households of rural families below poverty line including Harijan and Adivasi families. More than

†Original notice of the Question was received in Hindi.

††The question was actually asked on the Floor of the House by Shri Kapil Sibal.

35.56 lakhs connections have been released by the end of 31-12-1999. Government of India through the Rural Electrification Corporation (REC) provides funds as grants for releasing single point light connections, to the State Electricity Boards/State Governments. Priorities and the time frame for releasing connections are determined and decided by the State Electricity Boards/State Government concerned. State-wise progress of connections released upto 31-12-1999 is annexed as statement-I.

Statement—I

Statewise Progress of Kutir Jyoti Connections Released upto 31-12-1999.

S. No.	States	Single Point Light Connections Released (No.)
1.	Andhra Pradesh	431674
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	16459
3.	Assam	44680
4.	Bihar	290504
5.	Goa	1050
6.	Gujarat	59607
7.	Haryana	9996
8.	Himachal Pradesh	20397
9.	Jammu & Kashmir	893
10.	Karnataka	614430
11.	Kerala	36202
12.	Madhya Pradesh	681906
13.	Maharashtra	246786
14.	Manipur	16066
15.	Meghalaya	19440
16.	Mizoram	19972
17.	Nagaland	13721
18.	Orissa	100818
19.	Punjab	22746
20.	Rajasthan	100061
21.	Sikkim	20415
22.	Tamil Nadu	414301
23.	Tripura	19863
24.	Uttar Pradesh	213471
25.	West Bengal	139225
26.	Union Territories	1724
	Grand Total	3556407

SHRI KAPIL SIBAL: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am somewhat surprised to see the answer that has been given beccause the specific query in part (b) and part (c) is not even sought to be answered. I did not want, Mr. Chairman, the total number of connections. We know, the total number of connections released was 35 lakhs. What I wanted was the percentage of poor families in the rural areas, who had been provided with electricity under this Programme, right till December, 1999, and by when the remaining families are likely to be provided with electricity. Where did you give answers to parts (b) and (c)? I never asked the question, what the total number of connections granted till December, 1999 was. And the English is plain and clear. I wonder how the Government is treating our questions. I am really surprised. Would the Minister please clarify as to why part (b) and part (c) were not answered?

श्रीमती जयवंती मेहता: सभापति महोदय, माननीय सदस्य ने जो सरल भाषा में प्रश्न पूछा है, उस का सरल भाषा में ही जवाब देने का प्रयास कर रही हूं। महोदय, यह जो लोक-कल्याणकारी योजना हम ने शुरू की है, यह कोई कॉमर्सियल योजना नहीं हैं, लेकिन लोक कल्याण के लिए है। आप ने जो आंकड़े मांगे हैं, उस के आधार पर मैं यह बता सकती हूं कि एनेक्शचर की दृष्टि से हम ने टोटल 487.90 जो बिलो-पावरटी लाइन के विलेजेज हैं, उन के लिए काम किया हैं। उसमें अभी तक 38.55 लाख इलेक्ट्रिफाई हुए हैं। परसेंटेज आप पूछ रहे हैं तो यह बात सही है कि परसेंटेज इसकी बहुत कम है लेकिन उसके लिए सरल भाषा में मैं आपको यह बताना चाहूंगी कि रूरल इलेक्ट्रिफिक्केशन कारपोरेशन के माध्यम से मुख्य काम किया जाता है। केन्द्रीय सरकार द्वारा रूरल इलेक्ट्रिफिक्केशन कारपोरेशन को अनुदान दिया जाता है और रूरल इलेक्ट्रिफिक्केशन कारपोरेशन द्वारा विद्युत बोर्डों को यह पैसा दिया जाता है। राज्य सरकारों के लिए यह योजना ऐच्छिक बनाई गई है, ऑप्शनल बनाई गई हैं। राज्य सरकारों द्वारा ही यह योजना कार्यान्वित की जाती है।

SHRI KAPIL SIBAL: I don't want this. Mr. Chairman, I don't want this. My question is specific. I don't want to know the procedure becuase I know the procedure. What is my question? Part (b) says: 'What is the percentage of poor families in rural areas who have been provided with connection under the Kutir Jyoti Scheme?' Please answer that question. I know for a fact that prior to the Eighth Plan, one lakh families have been provided connection. In the Eighth Plan, it dropped to 11,000. In the present Plan, it is only 3,000 families. Why? I want you to please give us the percentage. You don't give the figures when you tell us the procedure. I don't want to know the procedure. You please give us the percentage of rural families who have been given this privilege under this Kutir Jyoti Scheme. That is all I want.

श्रीमती जयवंती मेहता: सभापति महोदय, ऑल इंडिया लेवल पर 42 परसेंट लोगों को बिजली प्रदान की गई है और उसमें से रूरल पापुलेशन का प्रतिशत अगर आप देखेंगे तो अभी तक रूरल एरिया में 31 प्रतिशत इलेक्ट्रिफिकेशन किया गया है। यह 1991 के सेंसस के आधार पर हम कह सकते हैं। ऑल इंडिया लेवल पर 42 परसेंट.....

SHRI KAPIL SIBAL: That also I don't want. This is regarding families living below the poverty line. What is the question? It is under the Kutir Jyoti Scheme. I don't want to know the figure under the Rural Electrification Scheme. What is the percentage of families living below the poverty line, who have been given electricity connection under the Kutir Jyoti Scheme? What was the target? What have you achieved? That is all I want. Please answer the question. This is in writing. This is not something which I said orally.

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM): Sir, with your permission, I would like to answer. I think the hon. Member-if I may submit, I should really apologise to him-is justified in saying that he had put a very straight question. We are revealing the answer. The truth of the matter if that the figure is not very complimentary. The total figure is 487.92 lakhs BPL households throughout the country. Out of that, we have done only 35 lakhs through our scheme. Though the amount involved is Rs. 214.6 crores, the misfortune, perhaps, is that most of these single-light connections are connections where meters are not really fixed. In the name of single-light connection, in many of the cases, more power than a single-light connection is actually drawn. The Electricity Boards are reluctant to use this grant. This is purely a grant. They are reluctant to use this grant. We have been pressurising them. In fact, in my own home State, I had to pressurise the Electricity Board Chairman to take a little more and we are still trying with each other to increase the figure. It is something where we need the help of Members of Parliament to make them understand that unless we get our households connected with power, there is no use of talking about full electrification. I agree with the hon. Member that this is a matter which needs real attention.

SHRI KAPIL SIBAL: But, at least, the exact figures should be given to us. They should be given to me in writing.

SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM: I will give you the figures.

SHRI KAPIL SIBAL: I believe you are talking about the figures at the macro level.

SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM: I will give you the figures at the micro level. You want the details.

SHRI KAPIL SIBAL: The other aspect which you may like to consider is that, for example, in Delhi, 30 lakhs of people are living in jhuggi-jhonpri. This is a rural scheme. Has the Government considered whether this scheme can be applicable to the people living below the poverty line in urban areas? This facility can also be extended to them because electricity is an essential commodity, as of today.

SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM: Sir, I agree with the hon. Member. We will look into his suggestions very seriously and I will try and see whether a part of this amount can be used for this prupose. Anyway, the whole amount is not getting utilised properly. If it can be utilised in urban areas, why not?

SHRI SHANKAR ROY CHOWDHURY: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to request the hon. Minister to give me the number of families living below the poverty line who have been provided electricity under the Kutir Jyoti Programme in the State of West Bengal. If the figures are not available now, they may be given to me later. My second clarification is this. How is the Kutir Jyoti Programme proposed to be applied in areas like riverine basins in my State where transmission line is not possible to be laid? Sir, in the Sunderbans area in West Bengal, we are depending on solar electricity which is not working very well.

SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM: Sir, in West Bengal, the total number of rural households is 89.03 lakhs. The total number of BPL households is 41.98 lakhs. The total number of non-BPL households is 47.05 lakhs. The total number of BPL households electrified up to March 2000 in West Bengal is 1.44 lakhs only. The total number of households to be electrified, ultimately, will be 3.43 lakhs this year. Sir, in West Bengal, overall, the rural connectivity has not been something to write home about. The West Bengal Government is quite aware of this problem. They have set up a rural corporation. They are making efforts to look into it specifically. In the Sunderbans area, an attempt was made by way of cooperative solar power effort. There the power is a little costlier and unstable because of some maintenance problems which they are facing. But we are looking into it. I would like to assure the hon. Member that we are conscious of the problem. The West Bengal Government, the electricity Boards and the Central Government, all of us together, are addressing this problem. I hope that very soon you will see some changes.

SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE: Sir, the major problem, as stated by Shri Kapil Sibal, is it has come down to 3000 in the Ninth Plan. It is not a question of forcing the State Electricity Boards. It is because of the new power policy which you have framed. The Boards feel that this is absolutely unremunerative. It is unremunerative in the sense that you are giving a grant. Up to giving a grant, it is all right. The remuneration is Rs. 5/- per connection which is becoming totally unremunerative for the Boards. The State Government as well as the Central Government have to decide about the subsidy. This has nothing to do with the Boards. Whatever is the target; let us quantify it financially. Subsidy is required for the people who cannot pay more than Rs. 5/-. Even tribal areas are involved in it. That is why it is not remunerative. Even 50 per cent of the generation cost cannot be collected from them. So far as these targeted sections of BPL and tribals are concerned, the only decision which we have to take here is, beyond Rs. 5/- whatever is the subsidy, let it be shared byboth the State Government and the Central Government. If you leave it to the Boards, it will never be possible. You can go on forcing them. Can we not decide here as to what is the financial quantification? If you really mean business, so far as the BPL people and tribals are concerned, this subsidy beyond Rs. 5/- has to be shared by the Central Government and the State Government as a poverty alleviation programme, not as a State Electricity Board programme.

SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM: Sir, I do agree with the hon. Member. The real issue which the Boards are facing is, after giving the connections, as I said earlier, there is no income from these connections. Often, a single light connection becomes not a single light connection. Therefore, it is more than calculated system. This is the issue which is arising. This is a very genuine issue. In a country which is a developing country, there has to be some transparent subsidy available for the weaker sections of the society. Now, in certain States, they have prioritised it differently. For example, in my State, it is for agriculture and also, by the way, for single light connection. In some States, they don't do it. Insofar as Centre's contribution is concerned, we are actually giving subsidy by indirect methods. But I think it is much better to look at these things transparently. The suggestion of the hon. Member would be looked at very seriously. We have a group of Ministers within the Ministry of Rural Electrification, because even in rural electrification, getting wire from an urban area or, may be from the main grid into a village is uneconomic. Even in UP, it costs Rs. 5-6 lakhs a village; and that village does nto generate the

income to justify that investment in the transmission line. So, there has to be a grant system. We are looking at it. I shall keep the Member informed. If he has any suggestion on how to go about it, he is welcome. Ultimately, it will have to be a Power Ministers' Conference that will decide it. We shall move towards it.

श्री नरेन्द्र मोहन: सभापति जी, आपका धन्यवाद। मंत्री जी ने जो उत्तर दिए हैं वे आधे-अधूरे हैं। अगर मैं यह कहूं तो वह मुझे क्षमा करें। मैं यह जानना चाहता हूं कि देश में लगभग 35 करोड़ व्यक्ति गरीबी की रेखा के नीचे रहते हैं, सात करोड़ परिवार हैं जो गरीबी की रेखा के नीचे रहते हैं। प्रतिशत की दर से शायद दशमलव 5 प्रतिशत हैं यानी आधा प्रतिशत परिवारों को आप इसके अधीन सुविधा प्रदान कर रहे हैं। यह कह देना कि देश में 42 प्रतिशत गांव के परिवारों तक बिजली पहुंच गई है, काफी नहीं है। पहली बात तो यह है कि क्या वास्तव में यह उन तक पहुंची है? उनको कनेक्शन देना मात्र बिजली पहुंचाना नहीं होता है। आप कृपया करके यह बताइये कि वास्तव में क्या उनको विद्युत की आपूर्ति हो रही है? अगर विद्युत की आपूर्ति हो रही है तो उसकी स्थिति क्या है? ग्रामीण क्षेत्रों में विद्युत की आपूर्ति की स्थिति बहुत ही गई-गुजरी है। आपने राज्य सरकारों का नाम ले दिया। सभापति जी, राज्य सरकारों की स्थिति यह है कि उनके यहां के विद्युत बोर्ड लगभग खस्ता हालत में हैं। उन्हें इस बात की चिन्ता नहीं है कि ग्रामीण क्षेत्रों में बिजली पहुंचती है या नहीं पहुंचती है। वहां पर रोज हाय-हाय होती है। हमारे उत्तर प्रदेश की दशा तो यह है कि वहां गांवों में 15-15 दिन तक बिजली नहीं पहुंचती है। इस स्थिति में कब तक सुधार होगा? क्या आधा प्रतिशत से भी कम परिवारों को बिजली के कनेक्शन दे देना ही काफी है? वहां के लिए क्या कुछ होने वाला है? देश की स्थिति कब तक ठीक होगी?

SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM: At the outset, I must say that, fundamentally, there is an investment that goes into producing power. There is a cost not only for generation, but a cost for transmission as well as distribution of power. It does not come free, unfortunately, like the sunlight does. We have to pay something for it. Yes; when one talks of weaker sections, a section which is below the poverty line, one does appreciate that in order to make them move up economically, one does some affirmative action, in other words, to help them out during the time while they are moving up. But if those who have the ability to pay, are not paying but expect power connectivity to be given, it is unfair.

SHRI NARENDRA MOHAN: No. I am not saying that. I am saying that.....

SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM: May I answer? Invariably, the misfortune is that collections that Electricity Boards make from rural areas leave a lot to be questioned; this is the misfortune of the system. That is why I

took very seriously the suggestion of my good friend that one should really have a transparent subsidy system where everything is visible upfront--you know how much the Centre would contribute, how much the State would contribute, towards which account, and what is the method of prioritisation in this sector. Today, we have a Rs. 37,000 crores deficit in this sector. It is because there has not been upfront transparency in the matter of subsidy. That is what is required. I am not saying subsidies are wrong. We need to have them in a developing country where there is a large population. But how do you expect an Electricity Board to continue to give subsidy when people who can afford to pay their bills don't even pay it? (*Interruptions*) And, just to give you an idea, the dues on account of rural electrification operation today from all the States work out in crores; it is Rs. 2251 crores. Those are the dues, only on rural electrification. So, so much money is borrowed by the electricity boards. They are incapable of paying it back. One of the reasons why we are looking at a grant-cum-other scheme for rural electrification is because no payments come. So, somebody has to look at this problem. I think while we talk of BPL and the weaker sections being subsidised, we should also insist that the better off should pay their bills.

SHRI NARENDRA MOHAN: Mr. Chairman, Sir, my question has not been answered.

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, no. Now, Shri Santosh Bagrodia.

SHRI NARENDRA MOHAN: I want to know when you will be able to give electricity to them, under the *Kutir Jyoti* Programme. What is your target? Is it going to be like that for all times to come? For how many years will it go on?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Your question is over. Now, the other Member is there.

SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I was surprised when the hon. Minister said that those who have to pay or who can pay are not paying. Mr. Minister, it is your mismanagement which has led to this situation. The law is very clear that you have to get this money from them, or, disconnect the line. If you cannot manage it, you cannot tell us as they are not paying; I cannot give the subsidy. It is entirely mismanaged by the SEBs and also by the Central Ministry. On this point, Sir, I would like to inform that after connections are given to jhuggi-jhopadis under the *Kutir Jyoti* Programme, it is found that the wires are not capable of taking that power. Just for maintaining the statistics, the Ministry and the officials go on giving connections. Even the transformers

cannot take it. Once they go out of order, what kind of procedure do you follow--at least, for supervision--I know you are not handling it directly-- so that the Central Ministry which is giving all these funds can also ensure that they are maintained properly?

SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I think, by one example the hon. Member would be satisfied. In the North-East, we had a problem where actually we were not receiving our dues for the power supplied, to a very large extent; almost 70 per cent of our dues were not paid. We tried our best to discuss it with the Governments, when looking at the fact that they were not able to pick up from the consumers, we said, "Be a little strict, at least, with the HT consumers; disconnect if they don't pay." The real situation was that the Boards told us that whenever they do this, those people manage to get interim orders or directions for connections. So, we got fed up and we said, "All right, we are going to disconnect power to you, our main distributors, the SEBs." Immediately, we got an order from the court, telling us, "Irrespective of whether electricity boards pay or not, you cannot disconnect supply, in public interest." Now, of course, we have gone back and told the court that this is not fair, etc. So, we have a situation where there is something called public interest, where everybody expects you to supply power, and when it comes to commercialising the issue by saying, at least, let me get the payment for my power from those who can afford to, there is not much sympathy. That is exactly why I am stressing the need that if everyone of us realise this, create an appropriate public opinion, things will improve. Actually, it has been improving in the last two-three years, essentially because I have had the cooperation of both the Houses.

†**श्री मोहम्मद आज़म खान:** अभी मंत्री जी ने अपने जवाब में कहा है कि बिजली बोर्डों को भुगतान नहीं होता। यह एक ऐसी समस्या है जिसका निदान और समाधान होना चाहिए। बिजली बोर्डों का पैसा अदा नहीं होता। जाहिर है कि जनता की तरफ से बिल की अदायगी नहीं होती और बिजली बोर्ड्स अपना काम नहीं कर पाते। अभी नरेन्द्र मोहन जी ने जो सवाल किया था उसमें दरअसल गांव में रहने वाले आम इंसान की तकलीफ का उन्होंने जिक्र किया कि जैसे हम किसी को दिल तो दें लेकिन वह धड़कता न हो। ऐसा दिल जो धड़कता न हो, वह किसी काम का नहीं है। ऐसा कनैक्शन जिसमें रोशनी न हो, ऐसी कुटिया जिसमें ज्योति न हो और उसे कनैक्शन मिल गया हो, वह किसी काम का नहीं है। सर, उत्तर प्रदेश में सूरत-ए-हाल ऐसी है कि पूरा उत्तर प्रदेश अंधेरे की चपेट में है। चोरियां, डकैतियां, बलात्कार हमारे यहां पूरे प्रदेश में उरूज पर हैं क्योंकि वहां

† Transliteration of the speech in Persian script is available in the Hindi version of the Debate.

पर अंधेरा है। वहां लोगों को कनैक्शंस मिल गये हैं लेकिन पूरा प्रदेश अंधेरे में है। यह जवाब पेश करना कि बिजली बोर्ड के पास पैसा नहीं है--हमारी दिल्ली की नाक के नीचे नोएडा बसा हुआ है। यह मालूम करने की ज़रूरत है। अभी हमारे यहां के बड़े बहादुर बिजली मंत्री ने छापे डलवाए हैं गांवों में और शहरों में। गरीब दुकानदारों के यहां जो एक्सपेलर चलाते हैं, चक्की चलाते हैं, थोड़ा सा पैसा कमाकर अपने बच्चों को पालते हैं, उन्हें सड़कों से घसीटते हुए ले गए हैं और थानों में ले जाकर बंद कर दिया है और 80 फीसदी लोगों को पैसा लेकर थानों से छोड़ दिया गया है। एक पैनिक क्रीएट हो गया पूरे शहर में। जहां से बिजली घर की गाड़ी गुज़री, वहां ऐसे हो गया जैसे कर्फ्यू लग गया हो शहर के अंदर लेकिन यही बिजली विभाग नोएडा के अंदर जो फैक्ट्रियां चल रही हैं, जहां पचासों करोड़ रुपया पूंजीपतियों पर है, फैक्ट्रियां चलाने वालों पर है, किसी एक से पूरे उत्तर प्रदेश में जो फैक्ट्रियां चल रहीं हैं, और जो फैक्ट्रियां बंद हैं, आज तक उनसे पैसा लेने की कार्यवाही नहीं हुई। बिल में मिनिमम चार्जेज़ होते हैं। हमने ज़िलाधिकारी साहब से कहा कि ज़िलाधिकारी जी, हम आपके बिल को देखना चाहते हैं कि आप कितना पैसा देते हैं। ज़िलाधिकारी की कोठी हमारे यहां नवाब की कोठी है। उसमें कम से कम पांच सौ बल्ब जलते हैं, उनके दरवाजों पर जो बल्ब लगे हैं, जो बहुत बड़े बल्ब हैं, उनका बिल ही मिनिमम से ज्यादा बनता है। जिस जिले में ज़िलाधिकारी और एस॰पी॰ चोरी करता हो बिजली की, उस शहर में किसी गरीब को चोरी के नाम पर पकड़ा नहीं जाना चाहिए।

मान्यवर, मेरा प्रश्न यह है कि क्योंकि मंत्री जी ने यह कहा है कि बिजली बोर्ड कर्ज़दार है, बिजली बोर्ड्स के पास पैसा नहीं है तो क्या उन लोगों से जो गरीबों के अलावा पूंजीपति लोग हैं, जो फैक्ट्रियां चलाते हैं या जिनकी फैक्ट्रियां बंद हो गई हैं, उनसे उस पैसे को वसूल करके जनता की इस समस्या को देर करने के लिए और कुटीर तक ज्योति पहुंचाने के लिए उस धन का इस्तेमाल किया जाएगा?

SHRI P. R. KUMARAMANGALAM: Sir, though the example was of one State, I think, he has raised a fundamental question and it deserves to be addressed. Sir, it is true. It is those who can afford to pay are the ones who are the biggest, if I may say so, violators; they consume electricity but are not paying. To consume electricity, you must have money to invest in equipment. Equipment costs money and the equipment uses electricity. So, it is the rich who are the biggest violators. In fact, one of the directions which we have given to the electricity boards as an advice is, 'Please look at those who are large consumers of power and catch them. Others don't matter and we can manage. What we can't manage is where the industry is running without meters and without any connections and directly of the grid at times.' I agree with the hon. Member and I shall take up the example which he has given and I will

forward it to the UP State Power Minister, who is my good friend too. We shall see that what best from our side we can do to tell them, 'Please do look at the persons who should really pay, who can afford to pay and who should pay, as a first priority.'

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, next Question No. 42, Mr. Chitharanjan.

AN HON. MEMBER: Sir, Question Nos. 42 and 53 can be taken up together.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, we shall combine Questions Nos. 42 and 53.

श्री गया सिंह: महोदय, प्रश्न नंबर 41 में एक सवाल है।

श्री सभापति: नहीं, नहीं.... देखिए, 25 मिनट हो गए हैं उस सवाल पर।

श्री गया सिंह: महोदय, इसमें हरिजन शब्द लिखा हुआ है। हरिजन देश में एक भी नहीं है तो किन परिवारों को मंत्री जी कनेक्शन दे रहे हैं? हरिजन इस देश में एक भी नहीं है। मंत्री जी के अनुसार कितने हरिजन इस देश में रहते हैं? वे बताने का कष्ट करें।

श्री सभापति: नहीं, नहीं..... वह सवाल नहीं है। Now, next Question No. 42, Mr. Chitharanjan.

श्री गया सिंह: कितने हरिजन हैं? हरिजन एक भी नहीं है। ये किसको कनेक्शन दे रहे हैं? इसको ज़रा क्लीयर करा दें मान्यवर।

श्री सभापति: मंत्री जी चले गए हैं।

श्री गया सिंह: स्टेट मिनिस्टर यहां हैं। यह ज़रा क्लीयर करा लिया जाए कि कितने हरिजन हैं यहां और कितने हरिजनों को ये दे रहे हैं? मंत्री महोदय से क्लीयर करा लें, यह एक महत्वपूर्ण प्रश्न है। महोदय, यह एक स्पेसिफिक और संवैधानिक सवाल है। मैं आपके माध्यम से चाहूंगा कि मंत्री महोदय इसका जवाब दें।

SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: How about clubbing Question No. 57 also with these?

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, that is different. We have taken these two together.

SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Sir, Question No. 57 also can be taken up with these.

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, not with this. I have seen it and it is not connected with these. I have seen. I have examined it.